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SEEN & UNSEEN:

by

Yone Noguchi

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SEEN & UNSEEN

or,

Monologues of a Homeless Snail:

by
Yone Noguchi.
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SAN FRANCISCO.

GELETT BURGESS & PORTER GARNETT

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& PORTER GARNETT

AH, WHO WILL CARE FOR MY POETRY?
I DO NOT KNOW YET BUT I DARE
TO HOPE THAT THERE MAY BE SOME
UNKNOWN FRIENDS AND TO THEM I
LOVINGLY DEDICATE THESE MY SONGS.

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Of these MONOLOGUES, numbers III,
VI, XIV, XV, XX, XXI, XXIV,
XXV and XXXII first appeared in
“*The Lark.*”

INTRODUCTION



WOULD have you think of him as I know him, a youth of twenty years, exiled and alone, separated from the mother, far away, abandoned by his native land and Time, a recluse and a dreamer, in love with sadness, waiting for the time to come to do his part in recalling the ancient glory of the great poets and philosophers of his land; watching, calm-eyed and serious, the writers of this new world, to see if the old words can live in the Western civilization; and if the sheeted memories of the Past may be re-embodied in our English tongue.

In the editing of these poems, I have collaborated with MR. PORTER GARNETT, whose sympathetic assistance has lightened a responsibility, that only our regard for YONE NOGUCHI might authorize; and

INTRODUCTION

if our hints and explanations of idiom and diction have aided him and if our hands, laid reverently upon his writings, have in some places cleared a few ambiguous constructions, how generously has he repaid the debt! We gave him but the crude metal of the language and he has returned it to us, minted into golden coin. He has honored our native tongue by his writings; he has lifted the veil of convention and discovered fresh beauties and unexpected charms in our speech. And so, when I try to offer some fitting introduction to the writings of my friend, his words come back to me; his virile phrases and unworn metaphors best paint his moods. What need to introduce him, indeed?— has he not in these pages spoken for himself?

For here in these Monologues, he has written with absolute sincerity and simplicity, his very soul's-journal, in nocturnes set to the music of an unfamiliar tongue, in form vague as his vague moods. Though ever unknowing of Self, he has given to these songs the truest lyric quality;— in his lonely cabin, even yellow-jackets-abandoned— haunting the midnight garden— alone in the dream-muffled canyon; at shadeless noon, sunful-eyed,— in the sober-faced evening— wrapped in the warm darkness

INTRODUCTION

of the invisible night— shrouded in the gray mystery of the mist— under the brave, upright rains, or swept by the boneless winds;— he has revealed himself a visitor in this sense-world, hid in a corner of the Universe, delighted in his dreams and reveries, with its shadows, its audible silence, and the poetic garments of its clouds,— disdainful of its Names, its childish play and the dusty manners of the city, lonely in Being-formed Nothing, his soul beating against the sadness-walled body, seeking for a casement to flit out.

So much for the journal and portrait of the man, whose shy soul roams lonely out, picked by the incessant tear-rains, his way lost in misty doubtfulness. So much for the subjective aspect of his visions of Nature, and his life of gentle melancholy. But of those dreams within the Dream, of the ‘Being’-fruit of his ‘Nothing’ orchard, of his rivulet’s unknown chatter,— how many shall understand? For his is the voice of the Occident speaking from the iron-bodied yore-time, where there is place without Place, and though he would give the Word to the word, not less, not more than the Word itself,— these, to many heedless ears, shall be but the unintelligible frogs’ rain-songs,— the

INTRODUCTION

tear-cries of the crickets on the lean, gray-haired hill. *And with his own whimsical despair, we may say, "O Homeless Snail, for my sake, put forth thy honorable horns!"*

Still it may be that some may read between the lines and find the doorless entrance to his philosophy. With him, they may gaze through the ripples, into the mileless bottom of the mirrory brook, and behold his strange shadowed world. And seeing its mysteries, they too may wonder whether the bird that flies upright into the atom-eyed sky,— or its reflected figure that sinks down into the roomy halls beneath the surface, is the real bird. They too may stir the waves of reverie, awakening thereby some unknown motion in that other-world, or with their eyes dimmed by mist-pains, and fingers all bloodied by rose-thorns, find in his corridor of Poetry, a refuge from the storms of vanity-winged Hope.

Yet it were but partly true to call this symbolism. It is too vague, too subtly suggestive for that. Such moods and nuances of feeling as these are not translatable into the logical and definite processes of Occidental thought. And though on the other hand, they are not distinctively Japanese in sentiment or in art, yet one might illustrate their intangible delicacy,

INTRODUCTION

by one of the Ho-ku's or "inspirations" of his own "high qualified" BA-SHO, meaningless but wisdom-wreathed syllables,— *elusive phrases*,— like opiate vapors *changing to the changing mood*.

"Alas, lonesome road,
Deserted by wayfarers,
This autumn evening!"

And so, who shall travel along the road where YONE NOGUCHI fares this Autumn evening? Not many pilgrims shall find the Way, but if haply, after the curtain of his life is drawn, one or two, after sailing on surgeful waves, shall pass this space of land,— a wandering, love-hunting breeze shall welcome them— the quail's note shall jump into their Sea of Loneliness— and in the ghost-raining night, whose shadow-mysteries are divided by the beams of his matchless Mistress Moon, in her chamber of unfathomable peace, the rustling of his willow leaves may break into the tuneful silence— a sigh may knock upon the drowsy airs, and a voice may whisper,— "Where is my friend?"

Well may he say, "What about my songs?" Shall there be no shadow,— no echoing to the end?— or must his Word, once uttered, ever

I N T R O D U C T I O N

roam about the Universe with voiceless sound !
Who, indeed, will care for his poetry ?

*Ah, the ripples know ! As the monotonous
rhymed rivulet of Time hurries down, day by
night, with her undifferent tone,— the ripples,
gone down far away, far away,— they know !*

Gelett Burgess.

SAN FRANCISCO, DEC. 1^{st.}, 1896

PROLOGUE



HE fate-colored leaves float dumbly
down unto the ground-breast,
thousands after thousands, matting
the earth with yellow flakes,

Whilst the brushing of a golden, Autumn wind
dreams away into the immortal stillness.

Ah, they roam down, roam down, roam down !
Alone in the dark green shadows of the can-
yon-forest, I never see a mortal behind nor
before me.

Alas for my beloved predecessors passed so far
away over the myriad seas and the mount-
ains !

Alone in the tranquillity, I see the colored
thought-leaves of my soul-trees falling
down, falling down, falling down upon the
stainless, snowy cheeks of this paper.

Oh, let them sleep; let them pass, anon, into
eternal drowsiness. Praise them not, O
World,— abuse them not, I pray !

In search of perennial rest, they fall down, fall
down, fall down, fall down !

Ah, they are the stuff of Eternity itself; my
death-hurrying, withered thoughts of poetry
are they !

“Ah, lonely, lonely,
Shall this Flower’s Neighbors be
When To-morrow comes ! ”

BA-SHO.

MONOLOGUES
OF A
HOMELESS SNAIL

I. *I COME BACK TO ME.*



THE space of land I passed along
hides stealthily away, the dusty
manners, the dusty souls, the
dusty bodies,— what the city is.

Alas, venerable Nothing ! as the nothing lives
out of mortal view;

Alas, worthy Death ! as the Death saves the
sheeted sins.

Such city, unvisible now in my spiritless eyes,
might be seen as holy rout in unknown
land.

And at last I came back to me, after sailing
on surgeful waves; at this moment, be-
tween the Present and the Future, the Past
and the Present,— forgetting what the
world was, yestertime,—forgetting what I
was, yestertime.

When the Future shall be the Past, “ I come
back to me,” or “ I go on to me,” shall
be as one.

What do I mean by *me* ? I, whom the god
made at first for me !

II *WHERE WOULD I GO ?*



LIDING downward the peace-buried, si-
lence-toned Somewhere, driven by
the gray Melody of the monoto-
nous-rhymed rivulet,—Eternal chant
of perennial spirits,

My soul wrapped in warm darkness, I lost drows-
ily the memory of times.

Roaming about the harmless sky through the chat-
tering atoms, accompanied by the White Mu-
sician—the mountain breeze, more snowy
than powdered marble—under poetry-string-
ed harp,

My weightless soul, round-formed, forgot the fan-
cies of my shuddering passion.

But for the remembering, (nay, for the remem-
bering even in forgetting) the mother,—
where would I go ?

Ever looking up to the high sky, heart-filled I
breathe the Western airs under heavy tears.

My shy soul was consoled then, as if I had drunk
my mother's sweet breath, love-frozen, out
of the far West.

III. *THE BRAVE UPRIGHT RAINS.*



HE brave upright rains come right down like errands from iron-bodied yoretime, never looking back; out of the ever tranquil, ocean-breasted, far high heaven—yet as high but as the gum tree at my cabin window.

Without hesitation, they kill themselves in an instant on the earth, lifting their single-noted chants—O tragedy ! Chants ? Nay, the clapping sound of earth-lips.

O heavenly manna, chilly, delicate as Goddess' tears for the intoxicated mouth of the soil, this gossamer-veiled day !

The Universe now grows sober, gaunt, hungry, frozen-hearted, spiteful-souled; alone, friendless, it groans out in the flute of the stony-throated frog.

Resignedly, the floating mountain of tired cloud creeps into the willow leaves—washed hair of palace-maiden of old.

Lo, the willow leaves, mirrored in the dust-free'd waters of the pond !

IV. *O, MATCHLESS MISTRESS MOON.*



BOUNDLESS silence, like dense magic
hair !

Poetic garments of opiate vapors !—

The mystery-guarding, forever un-
published, golden-sheeted volumes far down
in the rivulet, out of Time, out of Place,
under the frogs' rain-songs —

O the matchless Mistress Moon in a chamber
of unfathomable peace !

These ripples of water bearing radiant lanterns
(moons?) roam down;—are they not the
frogs' throatful breaths?

Lo, the moon in the sea-blue sky dome ! To
me, a golden casement to steal through in-
to the unknown world, tenanted by anoth-
er god; where it is serene as the dreamy
mists of Divinity, where it is free as fren-
zied clouds, where it is pleasant as wan-
dering, love-hunting breeze.

This world is not my residence to the end !

Alas, the moon has lost her way, harassed a-
mong the leaf-fellows on the darkling hill
top !

Is n't there chance for my flying out ?

V. IS THIS WORLD THE SOLID BEING?



NDER the void-frozen vanity-spirited
heaven mending cloud, this shade-
less afternoon,—the world faced
like a lean philosopher,—

The resigned poet, alone, delights in the corri-
dor of Poetry; the god watches the keys
of the entrance, nodding, lonely, in being-
formed nothing.

My soul, like a chilly-winged fly, roams about
the sadness-walled body, hunting for a
casement to flit out.

Lo, suddenly, an inspired bird flies upright into
the atom-eyed sky !

Alas, his reflection sinks far down into the
mileless bottom of the mirrory rivulet !

Is this world the solid being ?—or a shadowy
nothing ?

Is the form that flies up the real bird, ? Or the
figure that sinks down ?

VI. *SABRE-CORNERED WINDS BLOW.*



ABRE-cornered Winds blow !

Close up thy mouth; thy thin-wreathed lips shiver under the Winds !

Already-colored words are colored more by thy gossip of another.

Thy mouth is like a keyless door for thy myriad misfortunes, in this floating world.

Bold words be dead ! as often the word is little more than nothing.

Timid words be dead ! as often the word is little less than nothing !

Give the word to the Word; not less, not more than the Word itself !

Silence is the all of Silence: Stillness is the whole of Stillness.

Behold, the Heaven above is ever dumb !—

Under its Muteness, the Seasons change around;— the thousand trees grow up:

And lo, the never-broken curtain-canopy of heaven arches closely over the earth.

Alas, in this big cage of the universe, without an entrance, thy Word, once uttered, ever roams around the world with voiceless sound !

VII. *ALONE.*



LONE !

Though the heaven above break down; though the earth spreads around—apart, alone, not even with my own shadow in the world of darkness; with only my withered soul, housed in the tear-rusted body,

As a motherless wind in breathless vale, as a funeral bell stealing down into the unvisible world by a dream-muffled path.

Alone with my my own loneliness, with my own sadness, with my own reverie.

Alone in this ghost-raining night, my cabin walls dying like formless corpses into the darkness of vacuity.

Alone in this boundless universe, closing my mortal eyes; yet, under the radiant darkness, I am ever awake to the sheeted memory of the past.

Alas, my almost decayed soul picked by the incessant tear-rains, my one desire is to be myself as nothing.

VIII. *AH, IT WAS RAIN!*



AM like a broken-hearted waning
smoke out of tender love's chimney,
changed in an instant, as a hope-
decayed cloud;

Leaning upon the withered willow tree, my shy
dream, as a homeless wind, hunts formless
desire with boneless hands.

I am awakened suddenly by what?—needle-like
tears of my friend?—alas, he may be count-
ing somewhere his never melting tears.

Ah, it was rain!

Lo, the rivulet near by, curtains over the roomy
halls far beneath.

Dead, motherless, lonely, tearful world for me!
My willow leaves wither, while my friend is
gone so far away, and I lose his track mid
frozen tears.

Alas, such gloomy clouds above, gray-haired by
their sadness, storm about with dead-voiced
sounds.

IX. *TO AN UNKNOWN POET.*



WHEN I am lost in the deep body of
the mist on the hill,
The world seems built with me
as its pillar !

Am I the god upon the face of the deep, deep-
less deepness in the Beginning ?

X. *ALAS, NOTHING!*



LAS, nothing !

Wisdom gives the way to untruthfulness: Hope gives the way to feeble wisdom.

What talk, about Goodness, Badness, Success,
Unsuccess, Virtue, Vice !

Like dreams amid dreams, our lives in this
floating world.

Storms of vanity-winged hope, be silent !

Alone, abroad, I lost at last my way out of
sight in misty doubtfulness.

While hunting the doorless entrance of Hope,
my fingers were all bloodied by rose-thorns !

The cold-hearted sun could n't kill my dew-tears
ever shed under spirited sorriness—ever
dreaming of the ideal romance.

Alas, my own frozen dews !—formed times ago,
in the mileless West, when the sword-
handed hopes swept me apart from my
brother,—far away !

XI. *DREAMY PEACE DWELT WITH ME.*

REAMY Peace dwelt with me, whose
magic vapors enclosed me, softly
as lovers' shadows.

I ever nod upon the graves of Si-
lence !

I ever loll upon waves of muteness, wrapping
mists about my breast.

I ever roam around the unsettled land of
Dawn, where the ruins moulder into their
rest.

XII. *ON THE MIDNIGHT GARDEN.*



Y own shoes' tapping picks into my shuddering soul, which, like a wan priest in a starry heaven, floats on the unfrightening thought-seas,

In the midnight garden, taking her conscious slumber among sheeted mists issuing from the door-chink of the back hill.

Alas, the frogs' songs this night, so significant!
Peace,—or War?

The leaves die into sleep, the night dews having drunk up stealthily all the fragrances of the drowsy flowers.

My Spring willow-leaves stand with their eyes dimmed by mist-pains, like swooning maidens overdrenched under rains of love.

Alas, among the willow-leaves, my bushy haired love, alone, stands with willow-boned waist, graceful as a living cloud,—dressing her silvery star.

XIII. DRANKEST THOU SNOWY DEWS:—



RANKEST thou snowy dews of pleasure, write right on thy soul the taste of sadness.

* * * * *

Alone without friend,—abroad, I cover my ears against the wind's silly question: “*What are tears?*”

Am I a visitor in this world?—or a master of this world?

Alas, this evening of silence,—frozen darkness. No one in my sight but a tired traveling crow, havened by our wither-faced gate.

Ah, my soul roams lonely out, like a ghostly lantern under the rains, consoled even by the sound of the desolate funeral bell drowned by the rivulet, forgetting its way to an unknown other-world.

The icy word *alas* is made for me alone!

XIV. *SLIDING THROUGH THE WINDOW.*



LIDING through the window of sea-green Heaven,
Innocent misty vapors flit into the roomy hall of the Universe,
Exhaling from the formless chimney called
Spring, out of sight, where the god alone,
transmutes his poetry of Beauty.
The opiate vapors, in foamless waves, rock
about this dreaming shore of April-Earth.
Alas, the mother-cow with matron eyes, utters
her bitter heart, kidnaped of her children
by the curling gossamer mist!

XV. *WHAT ABOUT MY SONGS?*



HE known-unknown-bottomed gossamer waves of the field are colored by the traveling shadows of the lonely, orphaned meadow lark: At shadeless noon, sunful-eyed,—the crazy, one-inch butterfly (dethroned angel?) roams about, her embodied shadow on the secret-chattering grass-tops in the sabre-light. The Universe, too, has somewhere its shadow; — but what about my songs? An there be no shadow, no echoing to the end,— my broken-throated flute will never again be made whole!

XVI. *AT NIGHT.*



At night the Universe grows lean,
sober-faced, of intoxication,
The shadow of the half-sphere curtains down closely against my
world, like a doorless cage, and the stillness
chained by wrinkled darkness strains
throughout the Universe to be free.
Listen, frogs in the pond, (the world is a pond
itself) cry out for the light, for the truth!
The curtains rattle ghostlily along, bloodily biting
my soul, the winds knocking on my
cabin door with their shadowy hands.

XVII. *I RECALL MY DREAM.*



RECALL my dream, passed far away
into unvisible Somewhere, out of
Time.

Ah, I have drunk and known the
taste of water this very day !

Birds (moving pleasure) sing; flowers (satisfied
silence) dress themselves; winds (sublime
frenzy) roam.

I found out, at last, my dream of last night,
ever surgeful, ever excited.

Alas, I was ever heaping stones upon a baseless
land !

But when will the curtain of my life be drawn
down against this world (the world itself
is ever dreaming) where I dreamed my
dream ?

The time should be in my hand to know.

* * * * *

And the rivulet hurries down, day by night,
with her undifferent tone !

XVIII. *AH, MY BANANA TREE!*



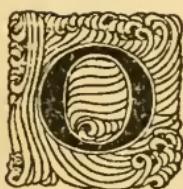
UT from gossamer hall ? Out from
cloud-like temple ? Out from mist-
muffled corridor ? Out from phan-
tom-dreamed canyon ? Out from
romance-dead field ? Out from heaven-
melting ocean ?—the age forgotten, naked
winds roam crazily after sadness-poetry,
singing their own gray songs around the
world of tears.

Locking my cabin door, my humble body alone
with the friendless soul (my master in this
world) I cover my ears against their
bloody voices.

Alas, their broken forms stand at my entrance !
Who knows !—my one-leafed banana tree may
be broken, laying his corpse on the bed of
icy earth.

Ah, my banana tree ! who gallantly stared
down this chilly-blooded world, with his
one soul alone, wrapping the ghost-tenanted
darkness about his soft-boned breast.

XIX. *LIKE A PAPER LANTERN.*



*H, my friend, thou wilt not come back
to me this night!"*

I am alone in this lonely cabin,
alas, in the friendless Universe,
and the snail at my door hides stealthily
his horns.

"O for my sake, put forth thy honorable horns!"
To the Eastward, to the Westward? Alas,
where is Truthfulness? —Goodness? —
Light?

The world enveils me; my body itself this
night enveils my soul.

Alas, my soul is like a paper lantern, its pastes
wetted off under the rainy night, in the
rainy world.

XX. *WHERE IS THE POET?*



HE inky-garmented, truth-dead
Cloud—woven by dumb ghost
alone in the darkness of phanta-
mal mountain-mouth—kidnaped
the maiden Moon, silence-faced, love-man-
nered, mirroring her golden breast in silvery
rivulets:

The Wind, her lover, gray-haired in one mo-
ment, crazes around the Universe, hunting
for her dewy love-letters, strewn secretly
upon the oat-carpets of the open field.

O drama! never performed, never gossiped,
never rhymed! Behold—to the blind beast,
ever tearless, iron-hearted, the Heaven has
no mouth to interpret these tidings!

Ah, where is the man who lives out of himself?
—the poet inspired often to chronicle these
things?

XXI. *THE INVISIBLE NIGHT.*

HE flat-boarded earth, nailed down at night, rusting under the darkness: The Universe grows smaller, palpitating against its destiny:

My chilly soul—center of the world—gives seat to audible tears— the songs of the cricket.

I drink the darkness of a corner of the Universe, — alas ! square, immovable world to me, on my bed ! Suggesting what ?—god or demon ?— far down, under my body.

I am as a lost wind among the countless atoms of high Heaven !

Would the invisible Night might shake off her radiant light, answering the knocking of my soft-formed voice !

XXII. *MY POETRY.*



Y Poetry begins with the tireless
songs of the cricket, on the lean
gray haired hill, in sober-faced
evening.

And the next page is Stillness — —
And what then, about the next to that ?
Alas, the god puts his universe-covering hand
over its sheets !

“Master, take off your hand for the humble servant !”

Asked in vain :—
How long for my meditation ?

XXIII. *DESTINY ARRIVES.*



TANDING by the gray-boned, naked-spirited wind, dark green through evening veil, the thousand leaves tremble in chilly palpitation.

Fading lips of love-dead rose sing of passed damsels' sadness (or pleasure?) colored, juicy cheeks.

Song-forgotten, homeless meadow lark, searching in vain the gossamer waves of the harmless field;—

Listen! an axe— the ghostly sound of nailing on the tear-frozen earth!— the chopping of wood far away,— ah, this evening!

Alas, Destiny arriving must soon be here against me!

XXIV. *THE GARDEN OF TRUTH.*

UNTIMELY frosts wreath over the garden—the staid bottom were air the sea.

Alas! from her honeyed rim, frosts steal down like love-messengers from the Lady Moon.

A light-walled corridor in Truth's palace; a humanity-guarded chapel of God, where brave divinities kneel, small as mice, against the shoreless heavens,—the midnight garden, where my naked soul roams alone, under the guidance of Silence.

The God-beloved man welcomes, respects as an honored guest, his own soul and body, in his solitude.

Lo! the roses under the night dress themselves in silence, and expect no mortal applaud,—content with that of their voiceless God.

XXV. *ALONE IN THE CANYON.*



THE audible flakes of the snowy coldness, stirred by the silence-breaker of night, the hoary-browed wind, wander down, wander down the sleeping boughs unto my canyon bed.

“Good-bye my beloved family!”—I am to-night buried under the sheeted coldness: The dark weights of loneliness make me immovable!

Hark! the pine-wind blows,—blows!

Lo, the feeble, obedient leaves flee down to the ground fearing the stern-lipped wind voices!

Alas, the crickets’ flutes, to-night, are broken!

The homeless snail climbing up the pillow, stares upon the silvered star-tears on my eyes!

The fish-like night-fogs flowering with mystery on the bare-limbed branches:—

The stars above put their love-beamed fires out, one by one—

Oh, I am alone! Who knows my to-night’s feeling!

XXVI. SEAS OF REVERIE.



OSSAMER-surfing, pleasure-foamed,
dream-bodied seas of reverie, odor-
ed with passion, waving in time
without time, place without place
My soul, heavy-weighted with the dusts of life
still, alas ! lingering in the rusty, broken
body, sinks downward to the bottomless
bottom of Reverie's sea, to the destiny of
to-morrow, unknown at this moment.

I hear but the words:— “ *The time is at
hand !* ”— “ *And behold it was very good !* ”

Welcome, snowy clouds, far away (frozen
breath of angels ?) revelling in the poetry
of their myriad changings.

I am stirring the waves of Reverie with my
meaningless, but wisdom-wreathed syllables,
woven by selfless pen, and destroying these
sheets, time after time, in my mystery en-
veloped desire— (is not desire but un-
known action ?)

Alone, dreaming as in floating poetry; my
form alone in the cabin (even yellow-jack-
ets abandoned) under the morbid-faced
summer sky.

XXVII. *I DELIGHT IN THE SHADOW.*



DELIGHT in the shadow !

The shadow seems to me as radiant
Virtue, as honeyed Goodness,—
as mirrory Truth,— as royal ser-
vant,— as staid Stillness,— as restful
Meditation,— as watery Wisdom.

In the shadow of my own body, my Soul, eter-
nal upon the deathless Earth, humble in
the face of Destiny,— a claimless visitor,
or settled master, leans upon the central
pillar of body.

Ever unknowing of Will, of Self,—like an op-
iate vapor softly issuing from the golden
rim of the moon, in the gossamer-frozen
sky,— unknowing of positiveness, like the
Spring breeze roaming among snowy-waist-
ed maiden flowers,

Alone, abandoned by my native land and Time,
living without lips or passion,

My Soul, silent as some dead face, contented as
some idol god, seeks the hidden sheeted
poetry of the Universe everwhile; and so
shall seek, perhaps after my death in this
visible world.

XXVIII *THE BOUGH-WIND BLOWS!*



H, blows ! blows ! the bough-wind
blows !

Do n't sweep away my body and
soul yet, please ! I still love the
world, whilst my dear mother lives.

Hark, the bough-wind blows, blows, blows,—
dashing the dusts off into the bottomless
Eternity !

Lo, the thousand gum-trees, waving to and fro,
renovate the color of the hanging dome,
Autumn painting the rushing California billow-
hills to a restful yellow.

Ah, blows, blows, the bough-wind blows to
awake forth the spirits from the vanity
dream !

XXIX. *AM I LONESOME?*



Y body and soul melt into the canyon solitude, which itself dreams away into the silence-moistened space of darkness-veiled earth.

Am I lonesome? — No, not I; but our night half-sphere seems sad, stirred in her stagnant reverie by the velvety-beamed breezes.

Let me now make the fire under the tree, and color the darkness for a little while!

Hark! what are these voices? — Are they of the winds tapping on my back with their phantom hands?

Alas, drowning in the airs of doubtfulness, I am surrounded by pale ghosts! —

Let me in these moments be blind, deaf and dumb in the darkness!

I am listening to Time's footsteps that come nearer, while the lofty moon gives me a silvern road, separating the shadow-mystery.

XXX. *MY LONELY SOUL.*



N the tomb-mute, memory-surging
night-garden, my tear-moistened,
trembling soul creeps about, hunt-
ing in vain my love's tiny curve-
lined foot-tracks, lost times ago.

The odorous, phantasmal breezes (sighs of a
frozen corpse in the earth?) blow up to
scatter down over the garden the icy sad-
ness, that waves about the lean, faded
moon, hung on a withered twig.

Drowned in the music of the unexplorable rivu-
let's sea-song; wet under the endless rain-
tears of the crickets' cries; beaten by the
beauty-decayed sabre-shadow of tree,

Alas, my soul hides, closing its eyes,— hides
in the mobile body-cabin, praying the dark-
ness to be a sympathetic friend!

The world-scolding night-bells of the church
hasten down into another roomy world.

Alas, what about my soul's future?

XXXI. *INTO THE PLACE.*

IEVER delight in these tender-spirited,
long shadows of light-flowering
summer leaves,— lying in time
without time, place without place
on the bed, my pillow resting on the sea-
blue mountain-side, formed like a damsel's
waist, far away.

My vapory dream glides down with the green
breeze into the mystic land of being—
fruited 'Nothing'-orchard, along the silence
foamed, sober shadows of the leaves:
Alas, into the place where the two roads meet,
to God Garden— to Demon Court!

XXXII. *SEAS OF LONELINESS.*

UNDERNEATH the void-colored shade
of the trees, my ‘self’ passed as
a drowsy cloud into Somewhere.

I see my soul floating upon the
face of the deep, nay the faceless face of
the deepless deep—

Ah, the Seas of Loneliness !

The mute-waving, silence-waters, ever shoreless,
bottomless, heavenless, colorless, have no
shadow of my passing soul.

Alas, I, without wisdom, without foolishness,
without goodness, without badness,— am
like god, a negative god, at least !

Is that a quail ? One voice out of the back-hill
jumped into the ocean of loneliness.

Alas, what sound resounds; what color returns;
the bottom, the heaven, too, reappears !

There is no place of muteness ! Yea, my para-
dise is lost in this moment !

I want not pleasure, sadness, love, hatred, suc-
cess, unsuccess, beauty, ugliness— only the
mighty Nothing in No More.

XXXIII. *CHANGES AFTER CHANGING.*



HE world cries out with childish tears:

The world smiles on the silly girlish cheeks:

The god forgets unbravely the death.

The universe changes after changing in countless times, from being to being, ever timorous, to dip the waters of perfect truth.

The sun sinks far down in the West, as a glorious king, leaving the never-decayed romance!—Oh, thou wilt not be up again!

I want no silvery moon!

Death be eternal death evermore!

Alas, this ignoble changing world, the shame-forgotten god,—the hateful world of changing!

XXXIV. *CHILDISH PLAY.*



INTOXICATION in delusion, dreaming
in intoxication, running, forgetting,
absent-minded, sadness after pleasure,
loss after gain, angry-faced by
unsuccess,— our lives are just like childish
play.

Throw thy gold out into the trail-less mountains ! Sink thy treasures down in the bottomless sea !

Thy fame is nothing; people's gossip, too, is
nothing.

Applause gives way soon to depreciation. The
applauder passes away, the depreciator also
passes away, and the listener follows them.
Before whom art thou ashamed ? By whom
wouldst thou be remembered ?

XXXV. THE RIPPLES KNOW!



HIVER-giving, lofty sounding horse's
hoofs, knocking on the warm
earth, (the mouldered history of
old) call to awake:— the horse's
waving mane, like heart-broken willow
leaves under wanton mists, is combed by
the steel-toothed, salty winds.

The young, romance-dreaming knight, straight-
bodied, singing the lust-despising war-song,
rushes along the road of chastening advent-
ure, his stainless scabbard inviting the
moon to follow, until finding a tired, coat
less tree, its past tragedy chanted in a
chorus of sadness by the snipe-group, far
away,

He leaves his horse and bending down to the
water of the rivulet near by, that reflects
his hope-dead face, he asks:

“*Has no Romance been kept for me here?*” and
comes the merciless answer, “*The ripples,
gone down far away, far away, they know!*”

I hear his thousand sighs as he turns his horse's
head to the home road, and I see the
green face of the rivulet which, with chilly
smiles, hurries down with unknown chatter.

XXXVI. *HUSH,— WHOSE SOBS?*



THE bare tomb stands in the wind.
The veil-less moon shivers, breathing
her yellow sighs among the
naked twigs.

The broken banana leaves chant in silence,
“*We are content with sadness!*”

The immovable hillside cabin is dumb, en-
wrapped by the thousand Autumn voices.

Hush! a maiden’s sobs!—Are they the ripple-
tears of the friendless brook, breaking the
stillness?

“*Oh, my love! my love, I am here!*” I mur-
mur, but I hear no reply in the darkness.

XXXVII. I AM A SHADOW.



TANDING like a ghost in the smiling
mysteries of the moon garden,
“Whose is this shadow, is it mine?
this shadow like an ashy, leafless
twig,” I said.

“Pardon, comrade,—away!” And my knocking
voice broke the birds’ slumber.

“Away!” I said again, “Away from me O
shadow!”

I stepped aside wishing to be free from the
shadow, wishing to be alone on the ever-
listening night-earth. “Oh, how long wouldst
thou follow me?”

Alas, death!—alas, death! O giant tree in
whose shadow my body-shadow and soul-
shadow lose themselves!

Resting now under the redwood tree, that
droops its boughs to stir the dreamy Earth,
I saw my own shadow was gone.

Leaving me to the silent monologue, “I am a
shadow, I am a shadow, but nothing else, my
friend!”

XXXVIII. *HOW NEAR TO FAIRYLAND!*



WHITE handed and yellow-veiled, the
angel rocks in autumn drowsiness.
Listen, the dream frozen drops of
the rivulet-manna melt into the
tuneful silence !

The Springlike warmth stealing into my body,
drying up the wet mysteries of my soul,
gives me flight into the freedom of va-
cuity, into roofless unfloored reverie-hall.

Lo, such greenness, such velvety greenness, such
heaven without heaven above !

Lo, again, such gray, such velvety gray, such
earth without earth below !—

My soul sails through the waveless, timeless
mirror seas.

Oh, how near it seems to Fairyland !

Blow, blow a gust of wind ! Sweep away my
soul-boat against that shore !

XXXIX. *AH, WHO SAYS SO?*


ET by the tapping sounds of rain on
the roof,
My soul finding not a melodious
silence— a warm reverie, stirs
the darkness of my chamber to flight,
while I lie on the midnight, lonely bed.
Alas ! The rains nail on the roof; nay, on the
darkness of the night; nay, on the silence
of the Universe !
Being even as a lost child in the night, I hear
no following tears of my heart-broken
mother— only the rains, dripping down
from the redwood boughs. What prattle !
Is it the chatter of some unseen mortal ?
Alas ! Ought a man to be one who ever
weeps ?
Ah, who says so ?

XL. *WHAT SAYS THE SILENCE?*



EE, the silvered leaves of the canyon
moon-beams shiver, falling down,
falling down through the redwood
bough-silence !

Alas, the hundred thousand myriad leaves are
scattered here and there ! Shall I myself
gather all of them ?

“ *Who art thou ? a miser of Nature ?* ” Fright-
ened, I look behind upon the stupid moon-
stillness of the dumb sea-heaven.

Listening to my audible emotion, I find my
own body rusting with the antique, odorous
loneliness of the night Universe.

“ *Where is my friend ?* ” I knocked on the
drowsy airs with my sigh. I hear an echo,
far away,— is that the answer ?

Hush ! stillness again: and I lie down by the
rivulet’s “ willy-nilly ” chatter.

Buried to-night under the moon-leaves, I try in
my blindness to read the heart of Nature,
forgetting all of myself but the tranquillity.

“ *Ah, what says the Silence unto me ?* ”

XLI. *THE DESERT OF 'NO MORE.'*



NTIL Nothing muffles over the Universe of No More, my soul lives with the god, darkness and silence.

Ah, great Nothing !

Ah, the all-powerful Desert of No More !—

where myriads of beings sleep in their eternal death; where the god dies, my soul dies, darkness dies, silence dies; where nothing lives, but the Nothing that lives to the End.

Listen to the cough of Nature !

After the cough, the Universe is silent again, my soul kissing the ever nameless idol faces of the Universe, as in a holy, heathen temple.

XLII. *A NIGHT IN JUNE.*



HE sad, tears-wrapping cricket-songs
moisten, as if by rain at evening,
the western fire-skirt— the dying
glories of the Sun.

At night, the sleeper-scoring cricket speaks,
overflowing the shy, breathless garden,
smiting my soul.

A heavy-colored darkness swallows up the
blushing-cheeked, shuddering roses.

* * * * *

I hear but the soundless voices: “*the Sun should
be displaying his to-morrow’s splendors.*”

Alas, the Universe has no death, but only
changing.

At the approach of dawn, the broken-throated,
shame-pronouncing cricket-flutes stop their
syllables against the mirrory-breasted rising
Sun.

Yea, the things unvisible or visible change ever
to the end!

XLIII. *ETERNAL DEATH.*



Y soul floats with furled desires to
the place wheresoe'er I will, with
printless steps, drowsily, musical-
ly, opening its eye-lashes, veiling
its cheek-smiles like a thief,—
Like wanton winds, wing-disturbed, like a
bushy-haired cloud with long and dusty
beard.

The eternal death is a triumph to me; my
beamless soul, like a twilight-mist, floats
upon unchanging, uncolored, tasteless,
soundless, serene seas of roofless, floorless
darkness.

There I hoe the poetry-planted garden of si-
lence; there I plow the pearl-fruited or-
chard of meditation.

I sing the song of my heart strings, alone in
the eternal muteness, in the face of God.

XLIV. *DIFFERENCES,*

THE beginning, the end— the birth, the death— the darkness, the light,— the voice, the silence,— the prosperity, the decay,— the love, the envy,— the pleasure, the suffering,— the awakening, the sleeping,— these differences, coming in unconscious mood, are what I ever welcome,

My soul-casement being opened full widely for the jealous god, who lives proudly under the same roof with the true god.

The juiceless flower-cheeks and the withered-green tree-hairs invite ever my soul, in this dusty world, to count the drops of smile-frozen tears and tear-frozen smiles.

XLV. *THE SHADOW OF THE TREES.*

N this moment the flute-silent birds
forget their fancies and fly up the
high heaven, chroniclers to the
shy goddess, leaving to me the
whole of the dumb Universe, muffled in a
gossamer reverie.

The noon-cloud, that disturbs the heart of the
sadness-welcoming mortal, passes far away
into an unknown shadow— ah, what is
the fate of that cloud?— wishing to leave
me contented, alone in the solitude.

Separated from the world-trouble, I rest under
the shadow of the trees, until my soul-lake
dustless, radiant-rippled, seems like a silvery
mirror for a serene beauty;

And I look up the doom-visible vault of heav-
en, moulding my face into the unfathom-
able poetry of the sea-blue sky.

XLVI. HIDING IN THE MIST.



N rustic loneliness, the hill-side
cabin stands enwrapped by the
gray mystery— the dream-mists.
Alas, my cabin-boat, without oars
on the nightmare billow-mists, knows no
shore whereon to anchor; floating on, she
longs for the kindness of a blast of wind !
Alas, such abandoned cabin on the earth !
Alas, such friendless soul of me !
How long should I be hiding in the silence ?
“ *Listen ! What says my little bough-dew ?* ”
I open the door of my cabin, and the silver-
breasted rivulet-maiden, crawling into the
mist, cries out her tears.
“ *Ab, what says she, my little dew on the roof ?* ”
Alone in the cabin,— in the mystery,— in the
the silence, I have not known for a long
time a mother’s message.
“ *Ab what says she, my little dew on the
window ?* ”
Alas, who can say the heaven-pillars are not
broken off this day ? Who can say the
earth-floor has not fallen down ?

XLVII. THE NIGHT-LYRE ECHOES.



ESTING on my pillow, the strings of the night-lyre echo in my ears, the storm reveling in the wall-less chamber of heaven, under the dim lanterns of the stars.

Alas, the lantern-fires, burning up my forgotten love-sheets, bid the mist-wreathed phantoms laugh me to scorn.

Enclosed by stillness, ghosts live there alone.

What welcome fate, then, for me !

Even my friend the broken-hearted banana tree at my cabin door sleeps like a strange idol.

“ O storm, for my sake, make my friend chant his sadness again, again ! ”

O smileless silence of midnight !— Now the barking of a dog, far away, ripples lonely along the waves of tears.

The untimely chatter of a flying meadow lark drops away into the unknown West.

Ah, what about my own sweet love !

XLVIII. *THE SUMMER'S LEAN FACE.*



RIPPLE-creamed, high-born moon-sickle, like some angel's proud eye-brow, clipped off by a rushing sabre-blast !

O dead ghost's garments of darkness,— the tangled-haired sheets of cloud !

The fluting of the crickets' shuddering tear-songs wave over the garden.

Fearing one shiver might break their frail flutes, my lonely, boatless soul, still as a frozen stone, drowns in the bottom of the sea of air.

The drowsy breeze, out of the western, dying fire, drifting along the trail between the earth-bones, knocking the leafy door with gloved hands, finds a resting place in the acacia trees.

How fair the lean face of summer-evening-earth; but alas, what suffocating scene, as of some sick-chamber !

XLIX. *I AM WHAT I LIKE TO BE.*



RT thou plundered, my half-a-day?"

I have lost just half a day!

I closed up my mouth; the time
had no power to control over me,
separated from the whole world.

I knelt down as a humble servant before my
soul,— forgetting my life, my fancy, my
knowledge, my wisdom, my thought.

Alone in my cabin, I closed down the casement
of my eyes,— I walled up the entrance of
my ears, and the odors of the world visited
in vain my nostrils.

Sadness, gladness, question, answer, coming
breath, departing breath, this day left my
soul!

I am what I like to be; Spring, Autumn,
poverty, friends, the world and myself all
are dead to me!

But for civility, my door would never be open-
ed to the floating world!

I. MY UNIVERSE.



E roam out,—
Selfless, will-less, virtueless, vice-
less, passionless, thoughtless, as
drunken in Dreamland of Dawn,
or of Nothing, into visible darkness— this
world that seems like Being.

We go back again,—

Contentless; despairless,— a thing but of Noth-
ing:

Into this unvisible world, or visible, nothing-
formed world, as storm-winged winds die
stealishly away, in the open spiritless face
of the field.

What about Goodness ?

Like the winds above, formless-formed, driving
mystery-iced clouds into a mountain-mouth.

What about Wisdom ?

Like winds, matron-faced, scattering flower
seeds around an unexpecting land.

The world is round; no-headed, no-footed, hav-
ing no left side, no right side !

And to say *Goodness* is to say *Badness*:

And to say *Badness* is to say *Goodness*.

L. *MY UNIVERSE.*

The world is so filled with names; often the necessity is forgotten, often the difference is unnamed !

The Name is nothing !

East is West,

West is East:

South is North,

North is South:

The greatest robber seems like saint:

The cunning man seems like nothing-wanted beast !

Who is the real man in the face of God ?

One who has fame not known,

One who has Wisdom not applauded,

One who has Goodness not respected:

One who has n't loved Wisdom dearly,

One who has n't hated Foolishness strongly !

The good man stands in the world like an unknown god in Somewhere; where Goodness, Badness, Wisdom, Foolishness meet face to face at the divisionless border between them.

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